Introduction

In rural areas of Latin American countries, it can be fairly common to have more closed off ideas when it comes to gender roles, permeated by the general culture built by bigger cities and the influence it can have on it.

In the case of Coyaima in the department of Tolima, this issue is further pushed in due to a series of outside and inside factors that affect the way in which culture and society flourish inside of this region. One may easily aim at the fact that a good amount of the population is indigenous, or the fact that the constant national conflict leaves them as one of the most common victims of violence, and the kind of economy that leads them being mainly agricultural giving itself to a naturally male-led society.

It can be seen as a mixture of all these factors together and the general values that are taught throughout the generations. In this case specifically, that of gender roles and responsibilities.

Like it is often seen in rural areas, gender roles tend to be selected from a very early age, kept throughout the person's growth and then passed down to their children in the next generation. This is obviously a generalization of the territory and their beliefs, but it does tend to follow the trend of having males be the "hard manual workers", with farming duties as well as a more prominent political presence, while the female side of the population is often relegated to either house tasks or informal business, such as selling food items in local markets.

These trends have been permeated throughout the years to the point of it turning into a tradition (such as it happens with many rural areas in the country). And despite the general growth and changes in culture of other cities in the state such as Ibagué, Coyaima remains with their conservative traditions throughout the years, only changing as of relatively recently with the inclusion of newly made appreciation for the role of women in society as well as political movements against gender violence (a phenomena fairly common in areas like Coyaima).

With this in mind, the following seeks to answer some of the questions and explain some of the terms that arise from this phenomena.

Literature (Gender Roles)

First and foremost, we have to define the concept of gender roles.

As seen by Talcott Parsons (1955), gender roles are defined as the socially constructed expectations built upon behaviors, activities and responsibilities considered appropriate for men and women in a specific culture. Parsons argued

that the división of men and women could be categorized as "instrumental" and "expressive" respectively, thus keeping "social balance" intact.

Driven to a rural context of a Latin American country, this can be seen as , this has been kept mostly intact due to the general lack of presence of industrialized areas, which in term values more physical work and resistance, in which men tend to excel at compared to women.

On the other hand, women tend to excel at other kinds of work not precisely physical, such as business in markets or housework, however, as of late there has been a rise in awareness for women in political positions, although these roles are still mainly held by male figures.

Likewise, Simone de Beauvoir (1949) refers to the concept as oppressive constructions that legitimate masculine domination and limit female agency. Which does tie into the ideal of women widening up their horizons in regards to possibilities for impact in the improvement of society as a whole.

In a more direct Colombian context, there 's the ideas brought by Florence Thomas.

Thomas says that "Gender in Colombia is a construct that refuses to die, but rural women are writing their own story".

Thomas’ line of sight can be more-so linked to the relatively new line of thought in Colombia regarding feminism. Much like many other latin american countries, Colombia has been left behind in regards to gender equality. Especially when it comes to rural areas where the general growth and room for change within communities is pretty halted.

To finish it off, we have to understand the role of men in this society and why it is that hard work seems inherently more valuable in rural contexts.

Due to the generally less technologically advanced areas in which this situations are found, it is far easier for male and female roles to be completely separated down to the general ideas drawn by Parsons. Men inherently have bigger bodies and wider contextures, and due to generational teachings, their work is passed down to their male offspring. While the man reaps the coffee off the ground, the woman can clean it up. The man collects, the woman cooks. The man works, the woman stays at home.

Now, we have to understand the context, with the context of rurality or rural areas.

There's 2 authors that can give a general description of the Word "rural" or "rurality": David Atchoarena and Lavinia Gasperini

According to them, a rural area refers to an open space with low population density, a high proportion of non-populated space, and where the soil Works as the primary productive source. Likewise, their inhabitants rely heavily on primary production activities (mainly farming).

Colombia is a very open area when it comes to primary production and rural areas, a good chunk of our economy does revolve around the production of goods such as rice, coffee, corn, and other fruits, vegetables and tubers.

Naturally, due to the geological position and often due to the general situations regarding social conflicts, it is quite difficult for overly industrialized equipment to reach those areas. Not to mention that adding said tools could actually hinder instead of helping the local economy, since most farmers tend to work in a more traditional way and do most, if not everything by hand.

In general, there's a good amount of factors and ideas that feed gender roles and prevent them from changing in any significant way. At least without a couple generations with the proper influence.

Methodology (300 - 400 words)

The main methodology to be used would be grounded theory with a focus on silent recollection of data. Through casual, non-intrusive conversations and by catching any and all info one may find in the process.

This is because despite their usual views, there's still a chance that asking directly about

The material to be used is

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